

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBER TO THE JAPAN-UNITED STATES FRIENDSHIP COMMISSION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, and pursuant to section 4(a) of Public Law 94-118 (22 U.S.C. 2903), the Chair announces the Speaker's appointment of the following Member of the House to the Japan-United States Friendship Commission:

Mr. MCDERMOTT of Washington.
There was no objection.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. MORAN of Kansas addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Dakota (Mr. POMEROY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. POMEROY addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

BRING FINANCIAL SECURITY AND STABILITY TO TAXPAYERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. FOLEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FOLEY. Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to be here today to try and urge my colleagues here in this Chamber and the one across the hall on the urgency of the tax package laid before us, passed by this House, supported obviously by the President who is in New Jersey today trying to urge the Senators from that particular State to be supportive.

Obviously as you watch Wall Street and look at the Dow Jones Industrial Average and you look at the Nasdaq and all of the economic indicators, and also the job losses occurring throughout the country, it becomes more clear and apparent of the urgency of the Economic Growth and Tax Relief Act passed by our body.

We have been certainly applauded and ridiculed by some Members for the speed we brought that bill to the Committee on Ways and Means and then ushered it to its passage on the floor. I will add that we lost not one Republican in the Tax Relief Act, and in fact gained 10 Democrats and one Independent.

Now it is obviously a major, important issue for us to have the Senators consider the important ramifications of not adopting this very important tax

relief effort of the President. First and foremost, giving everyone a raise is important because it allows taxpayers to keep more money in their pockets, support their families better, and reduce the burden placed on them by government.

Should Americans spend 40 percent of their income in Federal, State and local taxes? That is a basic question. That is a fairness question and needs to be answered by all parties. I think it is unfair that 40 percent of American's income is paid in Federal, State and local taxes.

Should families pay more in taxes than for food, clothing, and shelter combined? That makes no sense whatsoever. Wasteful Washington spending is a dangerous road to travel in a weaker economy. We are concerned. We hear the notion of triggers that have been advocated by some, and we suggest if you use a trigger on anything, use it on spending as well, to make sure that budget surpluses do not continue and we do not spend our way back into the days of a \$5.7 trillion accumulated debt which we witnessed when we came to Congress in 1994 and quickly reversed.

We should let the American people spend their own money to meet their own needs. There are too many people in this Chamber and too many people in this Capitol who believe that the money sent to us is Washington's money not the people's money. People every day go to work and work very hard to make a living for themselves and their families only to see so much money taken out in the form of taxation: Income tax, estate tax, excise taxes, property taxes, you name the litany of taxes, whether it is on your cable bill, TV bill or other charges such as gasoline taxes.

What will happen if we pass our tax relief bill. We believe more jobs, more take-home pay, a stronger economy. It will save the average family of four earning \$55,000 a year, certainly not rich, approximately \$1,930. To some that may be small, but to the family earning \$55,000, that is a watershed of new moneys to help save for college or pay for prescription drugs.

At least 60 million women income-tax payers will save money with our plan. More than 60 million African American income-tax payers will save money with our plan. More than 50 million Hispanic income-tax payers will save money on our plan. This means more money for college, a second car, or even a much-needed vacation.

So let us not have the constant politics-over-people argument that seems to resonate in our capital city. Let us put people before politics and pass a bill that will help us bring financial security and stability to our taxpayers. Let us return their hard-earned money to them so they can spend it in their community, on their families and on their priorities. Let us not make our priorities forced upon them. We can balance Social Security and secure it for the future. We can save Medicare.

We can do so many things, including a prescription drug policy, but we also have to recognize that every priority a Member of Congress assumes is so does not need to be that of every American.

Mr. Speaker, let us balance the objective and rule with fairness and provide relief, fiscal strength and security, and move this bill forward so that the President of the United States can have a chance to pass this very important legislation.

□ 1230

COMBATING AIDS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, recently drug companies announced that they would sell anti-AIDS drugs in southern Africa at a considerable discount. This would still entail hundreds of dollars per person. The recent experience of Bristol-Myers Squibb gives me caution. A \$100 million, 5-year initiative that was meant to donate money for AIDS drugs in Africa has boiled down to almost nothing. The reasons are not entirely clear. Although this was to be a charitable gift, the money has come down to \$1.3 million per year to five participating countries.

I recall that when Prime Minister Mbeki of South Africa was here for a visit last year, we all wondered why Mbeki was embroiled in a torturous notion about the cause of AIDS. I wish he had been more forthright about what his real problem was, and when he met with the Congressional Black Caucus I believe I was able to extract from him what his real problem was. South Africa offers free medical care, and on cross-examination it became clear that if South Africa were to even use the rather inexpensive drugs to combat mother-to-infant transmission it would use up its entire medical budget.

We must not forget that with the great importance we attach to drugs and especially the agreement of some of these companies to offer drugs at discount rates in southern Africa, that in developing countries nothing can replace prevention. In this country, Medicaid is overwhelmed with the costs of AIDS, but it is an entitlement, so people are going to get it. In developing countries, where there is TB and malaria and hundreds of other diseases, to superimpose our notion of how to combat the disease is not going to work. I hate to consider it, but it is true. It seems to me that it is time to face the importance of continuing to stress prevention as the most important strategy not only in this country but especially in developing countries.

Developing countries are being set back decades because of the AIDS crisis. To the great credit of some of the companies and others around the world, we want drugs to be made available to developing countries as well. It